

# ***GEORGIA SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM***

## ***CANINE TEAM STANDARDS DISASTER SEARCH AND RESCUE***



**JANUARY 1, 2013**

# ***Georgia Search and Rescue Response System Canine Team Standards Disaster Search and Rescue***

<b><u>Table of Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
Table of Contents	2
Purpose	3
Scope	3
Membership	3
Code of Ethics	5
Definitions	6
Organizational Structure	7
Handler Requirements	8
SAR Operations	8
Legal Aspects	9
Response Protocols	9
Record Keeping	10
Training	10
Equipment	11
Physical Condition	12
Canine Parameters	13
Relationship with Canine	13
Canine Requirements	14
Aggression Policy	16
Testing and Certification	16
Member Testing Parameters	17
Testing Programs	17
Evaluator Parameters	17
Disqualification Criteria	18
Review and Approval of Standards	18
Questions or Comments	18
Attachment A – Equipment List	19
Appendix B – Disaster Briefing Information	20
Appendix C – Disaster Marking Structures	21
Appendix D – Purina Canine Body Condition	22
References	23

# CANINE TEAM STANDARDS

## Disaster Search and Rescue Canine Teams

Subject	Date Approved	Date Effective
Disaster Canine Team Standards – 1 <sup>st</sup> Edition Issued to Canine Teams	December 15, 2010 January 1, 2011	January 1, 2011 January 1, 2011

### I. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of canine team standards is to identify the knowledge and skills needed by an individual and their canine partner to perform as a disaster search and rescue canine team (canine team). These standards recognize the need for the canine team to acquire and maintain skills, in a wide variety of search operations, through continuing education and training.

### II. **SCOPE**

- A. These standards are intended to define minimum qualification requirements for a canine team.
- B. These standards are designed for governmental canine teams who wish to meet the knowledge and skills required to perform as a canine team.
- C. The canine team should be able to perform the following:
  - 1. Search for live persons and perform search and rescue operations in an urban disaster, or similar situations.
  - 2. .
- D. The canine team should be capable of performing these functions anytime of the year, day or night, and in all weather conditions rendered safe and feasible for search operations.
- E. The canine team may work with a variety of individuals and organizations, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, volunteers and family members of the missing subject(s).

### III. **MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Membership is for a “Georgia Search and Rescue Task Force” (TF). The primary function of the TF is to search, rescue and locate live persons trapped under debris in a collapsed building event, or similar incident. Within the TF, the TF Canine Unit’s primary function is to provide canine resources to search and locate live persons for local, state and federal agencies that may respond to urban disaster missions.
- B. Individuals must be a licensed firefighter, certified law enforcement officer, licensed EMT or an employee of an emergency management agency in

- good standing to apply as a canine handler for a TF. Proof of certification and/or employment will be required.
- C. All individuals must go through the Georgia Search and Rescue Response System membership process. No TF shall directly appoint any individuals as canine handlers, regardless of their membership status.
  - D. Due to its operational size limitations, membership to a TF canine unit will be on an invitation only basis.
  - E. Membership is to apply as a canine handler for a TF to conduct searches with a canine partner for disaster live search and rescue functions.
  - F. .
  - G. An individual may apply to a TF as a canine handler without a canine. However, the individual must obtain a canine partner that is suitable for the TF functions within six (6) months of becoming a TF member. If the individual does not obtain a canine partner within these six (6) months, their membership status with the TF may be reconsidered. Individuals without canines shall be considered helpers, and assist other canine teams as helpers until they acquire a canine.
  - H. The Program Manager reserves the right to direct canine handlers to a TF that best fits the overall needs of the Georgia Search and Rescue Response System. Every effort will be made to accommodate prospective canine handlers to the TF of their choice. However, it is the intention of the GEMA to have a diverse group of canine teams with various backgrounds and from various local agencies for each TF.
  - I. The minimum number of canine teams on a TF shall be two (2) with a maximum number of twelve (12) canine teams, but may be increased due to operational need.
  - J. The canine team must successfully complete all application requirements to be considered for membership.
  - K. Within the State of Georgia, there is a two (2) year commitment required by all Task Force members. Because a GSAR K9 Team is recognized as a member of a Task Force, K9 Team members shall also adhere to this commitment. At the end of the two year time, a team member must renew their commitment.
  - L. If a member joins another search and rescue team or if their membership with a local team changes, they shall notify the K9 Coordinator.
  - M. Annual membership performance assessments shall be conducted for each member.
  - N. The process for membership includes the following. The canine team shall complete each step before proceeding to the next step:
    - 1. Canine team application completed, reviewed and processed.
    - 2. Handler interview by Selection Committee.
    - 3. Handler background and screening completed.
    - 4. Home Assessment conducted.
    - 5. Task Force Leaders have final approval of selection of handlers.
    - 6. Handler accepted and approved for membership.

7. Handler completes and signs all required membership documentation.
  8. Letter issued to handler outlining their membership.
  9. Canine screening process and documentation completed.
  10. Handler successfully completes all required training as a Canine Search Specialist.
  11. Canine team successfully completes disaster testing and certification.
- O. After completing all application requirements, the canine team shall be on a one (1) year probation period. During this time, the member's membership may be terminated with or without cause by the TF management. There will be no appeal for probationary members if terminated.
- P. TF membership does not provide any monetary compensation, medical benefits or release from liability for the canine team.
- Q. Membership shall be considered a privilege, and the TF holds the right to discontinue membership privileges to any canine team at any time.
- R. Membership definitions:
- Associate – The individual has completed the application and interview process, and has been approved to join the TF.
  - Operations – The individual has completed all required TF training, including the physical fitness test as referenced in Section VII, Handler Requirements, Subsection G #4, and is available to conduct operational functions in the field.
  - Full – The individual has completed the Associate and Operations level requirements and has completed the one (1) year probationary period with the TF.
  - Reserve – The individual has completed the application and interview process, and has been approved to join the TF. However, due to unforeseen circumstances (illness, family emergencies, job change, move, etc); they are unable to participate in TF events for 90 days or more. They will remain on reserve no more than 6 months. After 6 months, their membership status will be reconsidered.

#### **IV. CODE OF ETHICS**

- A. Canine teams must abide by Code of Ethics.
- B. Canine teams must abide by all applicable local, state or federal laws, and rules and regulations.
- C. Violation of any laws, rules and regulations or Code of Ethics may result in loss of certification, license, loss of membership status, and/or referral to appropriate authorities.
- D. Included along with the rules and regulations and Code of Ethics, the canine aggression policy will be utilized at all events and any canine teams that violate this policy will be asked to leave the event immediately.
- E. Canine teams will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all events and treat all other members and canines with respect.

- F. Canine teams shall demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and teamwork and positive attitude toward TF members, and shall not directly or indirectly conduct any actions detrimental to the TF members or command staff.
- G. Unless a certified peace officer, handlers will not be allowed to carry firearms at any events.
- H. No transportation, possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol shall be allowed at any events.
- I. Persons shall not openly or publicly disagree with any aspect of a search and will only offer positive and constructive advice during official critiques of searches. Disagreements/conflicts shall be conducted privately and all parties shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
- J. Persons shall understand that a search for a missing person is considered a potential criminal investigation until resolved and that the inadvertent or intentional disclosure of information could adversely impact or jeopardize any resulting criminal prosecution.
- K. Persons will adhere to strict operational security measures when participating in a search and will not divulge information relating to the search to any individual not participating in the search without first clearing the need for, and scope of, such disclosure with the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction and/or TF command staff.
- L. No persons shall utilize their involvement with the TF for personal or financial gain. If a conflict of interest arises (or the perception of a conflict of interest arises) the person shall notify the K9 Program Director and their K9 Coordinator immediately. This includes but is not limited to handing out personal or local team business cards and/or promoting local individuals or local team interests while being deployed / activated with the TF.
- M. Only after a canine team is certified and receives full membership from the TF, they may seek permission to place their TF membership information on pre-approved material and sites (business cards, web site, brochures, etc.). The following language is allowed:
  - 1. Handler's name
  - 2. Canine's name
  - 3. Members of the Georgia Task Force #\_\_\_\_\_ – Certified (date)Any additional language must be pre-approved by the K9 Program Director. If persons inquire about the TF canine team, they should be directed to the respective K9 Coordinator and/or K9 Program Director.

## V. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Canine Specialist (Handler)** – An individual who specializes in handling a canine. This individual has a search canine partner who works together as a team to search for live persons. The canine may be in training and/or certified with the handler.

- B. **Deployable Canine Team** – A canine team that is comprised of a Canine Specialist (handler) and their search canine that have successfully completed all training, testing and certification requirements and are in good standing with a TF.
- C. **Certified Canine Team** - A canine team is comprised of a Canine Specialist (handler) and their search canine that have successfully completed testing and certification requirements and for various reasons are not a deployable team (training, injury, etc).
- D. **Candidate Canine Team** – This team has gone through the application, interview and canine assessment and has been accepted as a canine team for a TF. This team is preparing to attempt the testing and certification to become a deployable canine team.
- E. **Helper** – Anyone who is willing to assist in the development of canines for the benefit of the TF and who is not training a dog, but is regularly attending TF training events. Individuals who are selected as a canine specialist but do not have a canine, shall be considered as a helper for the TF canine program.
- F. **Visitor** - An individual who expresses an interest in applying as a TF member and would like to attend canine training TF events to educate themselves on the requirements of a disaster canine team. Visitors will not be allowed to bring a canine to a TF event except with the approval of the K9 Coordinator and with the intention of the canine being assessed as a disaster canine candidate.
- G. **Event** - Any training, evaluation, test, deployment, or gathering consisting of at least one canine handler team or teams and other persons.
- H. **Hosting Agency** - An Agency, Task Force, Department, or Entity that sponsors (authorizes, recognizes and supports) a canine event.
- I. **Support Personnel** - Persons who are at least twenty-one (21) years old and provide support to a Canine Specialist before, during or after search operations.
- J. **K9 Program Director** – State of Georgia authorized representative that is responsible for the overall management and coordination of the State of Georgia's Canine Program.
- K. **K9 Coordinator** – Individual selected and approved to be responsible for the management and coordination of a TF canine unit they have been assigned to.
- L. **Wilderness Search** – An event or activity that occurs in an area primarily consisting of wooded, rural, suburban or metropolitan areas whereby the area and/or structures are still in tact and have not been damaged or destroyed by a manmade or natural disaster or have not been structural affected by an emergency.
- M. **Disaster Search** – An event or activity that occurs in an area primarily consisting of debris piles resulting from a manmade or natural disaster. These include tornadoes, hurricanes, improvised explosive devices, collapsed structures, etc. These events may occur in wooded, rural,

suburban or metropolitan areas that require specialized technical training, rescue and response.

## **VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- A. Details regarding the organizational structure of the Georgia Search and Rescue Response Systems are outlined in the Georgia Search and Rescue Response System Operations Manual and the Georgia Search and Rescue Response Task Force Mobilization Manual. All TF members shall abide by these guides.
- B. K9 Coordinators selected and approved by the Selection Committee shall be appointed and designated for each TF.
- C. K9 Coordinators shall be responsible for the management of their respective TF canine unit.
- D. K9 Coordinators shall appoint an Assistant K9 Coordinator who shall act as the K9 Coordinator as deemed necessary in their absence.
- E. The K9 Coordinator shall have the authority to appoint a K9 Training Coordinator as deemed necessary.
- F. Canine teams shall report directly to their respective K9 Coordinator for any activities related to the TF canine unit.
- G. A State of Georgia authorized representative shall be appointed as the State of Georgia's K9 Program Director and they shall be responsible for the overall management of the State of Georgia Canine Program.
- H. K9 Coordinators shall provide information to the K9 Program Director relating to their canine unit. This information includes, but is not limited to, selection of canines, progress reports of canine teams, training, personnel appointments and personnel issues, equipment needs, etc.
- I. Visitors are allowed to attend one canine training TF events with the intention of educating themselves on the requirements of becoming a disaster canine team. Upon their second attendance, visitors should complete a TF application. Visitors will not be allowed to bring a canine to any TF event except with the approval of the K9 Coordinator and with the intention of the canine being assessed as a disaster canine candidate.
- J. The TF and the State of Georgia reserves the right to reassign K9 Coordinators and/or canine teams to another TF to fit the overall needs of Georgia's Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

## **VII. HANDLER REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. SAR OPERATIONS**

- 1. Individuals must be at least twenty-one (21) years old. Proof of age may be required.
- 2. Individuals must be U.S. citizens and a full-time or volunteer first responder employee (firefighter, law enforcement officer, EMT, EMA) of a Georgia governmental entity. Proof of governmental employment may be required.
- 3. Individuals must be able to read and write and be proficient in the English language.

4. The handler shall have the ability to develop basic search canine assignments for a search incident and provide appropriate recommendations for additional resource support to the incident.
5. The handler shall understand the proper Chain of Command within the Georgia Search and Rescue Response System during all TF events.
6. The handler shall demonstrate professional and proper conduct as it relates to public safety agencies, volunteers, the family of the missing subject(s) and the media.
7. The handler shall operate under the National Incident Management System as required by Georgia law and/or state or federal protocols.
8. The handler shall have an understanding of general safety considerations in search, rescue and recovery operations, including critical incident stress debriefing.

## **B. LEGAL ASPECTS**

1. Understand the roles and responsibilities at the local, state and federal level.
2. Understand and abide by approved and established methods for reducing liability exposure.
3. Follow all applicable local, state and federal laws.
4. Have a working knowledge and understanding of how to respond to and protect a possible crime scene, including but not limited to, chain of evidence and documentation.
5. Understand the parameters of membership with the TF, and understand there are legal ramifications for my actions as a member.

## **C. RESPONSE PROTOCOLS**

1. All members of a TF shall abide by the Georgia Search and Rescue Response Systems Operations Manual and shall abide by the Georgia Search and Rescue Response Task Force Mobilization Manual.
2. The canine team must be certified prior to responding to an incident.
3. The canine team shall respond to incidents only after proper authorization and approval by the K9 Program Director, K9 Coordinator, , Incident Commander and/or TF management team.
4. The handler must be able to recognize the team's capabilities and limitations in responding to various incidents.
5. The canine team shall respond to incidents in uniform and with all necessary equipment, including personal protection equipment.
6. Upon arriving at the scene, the team shall check in at Command Post, Incident Commander and/or TF management team to obtain search information and instructions.
7. If requested, have photo identification and required license and/or certificate available for verification.
8. Any accident/injury shall be reported immediately to the Command Post, Incident Commander and/or TF management team.

9. Canines owned by a TF may only be utilized at TF functions, events and deployments. Violation of this rule may jeopardize the handler's membership status and/or the canine being reassigned to another handler.
10. Canines that are members of a TF and owned by an individual may utilize their canines for non-TF functions, events and deployments, but must notify the TF Leader, K9 Coordinator and/or Canine Program Manager
11. If an individual is also a member of another search and rescue team, the TF takes priority over any and all events and missions. In summary, if the TF and the other search team have training or missions scheduled on the same time or day, the individual must respond to TF events and missions. This includes situations where the individual is called out initially by another search team and then the TF is deployed, the individual must respond as a TF member. If an individual refuses to be deployed as a TF representative and deploys with the other search team, this may constitute immediate termination from the TF.
12. If a privately owned canine is requested to assist in searches that do not involve the TF, the TF takes no responsibility for any activities conducted by the canine team. Also, the canine team shall not use any equipment or identify themselves as a TF canine team while conducting these searches.
13. If a privately owned canine is requested to assist in searches that do not involve the TF, and they are requested by **any** state or federal agencies, they must contact the K9 Coordinator and/or the K9 Program Director. Also if these searches last longer than 12 hours and/or involve more than two agencies, the K9 Coordinator and/or the K9 Program Director should be contacted immediately. This does not mean that the TF will be activated, but simply notification that a search is ongoing that may require additional resources.

#### **D. RECORDKEEPING**

1. The handler shall maintain and keep a current log book documenting the training he/she has performed with their canine partner. If requested, the handler shall present their training logs.
2. The canine team shall conduct at least 16 hours of training and maintenance (care, feeding, etc.) on a monthly basis.
3. Upon the completion of an incident, the handler shall provide the appropriate agencies and/or K9 Coordinator with a search report outlining their activities during the incident. The report should be completed and sent to the appropriate agencies within fourteen (14) days from the last day of the team's incident activities.

#### **E. TRAINING**

The following minimum training is required for the canine team. Documentation showing proof of successfully completing the training will be required by the canine team. The table below is a summary of the courses and required hours.

Course	Hours	Comments
Firefighter License	Varies	Personnel must be FF LE, EMT, EMA, CERT) to pursue disaster operations (Paid or Volunteer)
Canine Search Specialist Course	46	May be taken in Georgia or out-of-state approved CSS Course
Structural Collapse Technician Course	80	This course exceeds the US&R Orientation Training and is required for all Georgia USAR members
ICS – 100, 200, 700 and 800	8	2 hours for each course
CPR / First Aid – Human	16	May be covered by higher first aid training (EMT, Nurse, etc)
First Aid – Canine	6	
Critical Incident Stress (CISD)	-----	As needed based upon mission/event
USAR Disaster Fitness	2	Physical fitness – 5 stations. May be covered by agency physical fitness program.
Hazmat First Responder Operational Level, 29 CFR 1910-120	48	May be covered in firefighter training. If not a licensed firefighter must complete this training separately.
Respirator Training, 29 CFR 1910-134	2 -4	May be covered in firefighter training. If not a licensed firefighter must complete this training separately.
WMD Awareness Training, Basic Course	6	
WMD Enhanced OPS Training	16	
SUSAR Disaster Recovery Evaluation and Certification	8	SUSAR evaluation test and certification (federal level test)
Training Hours	250	Approx. time required to train canine
<b>TOTAL HOURS</b>		<b>Depends on prior training</b>

### 1. Perquisite

- Handlers shall have a minimum of two (2) years' canine experience. Experience with a "working/service" dog is not necessary, but a basic understanding of handling a dog is required.
- If a peace officer, the handler shall have a current peace officer's certification and be in good standing with the Peace Officers Standards and Training Council.
- If a firefighter, the handler shall have a current firefighter's certification, and be in good standing with the Firefighters Standards and Training Council.
- If an EMT, the handler shall have a current EMT license, and be in good standing with the Department of Public Health.
- If an EMA employee, the handler shall have proof of EMA employment and be in good standing with a local emergency management agency.

## 2. Awareness Level Training

- The handler shall complete all basic training required by all members as determined by the TF. This shall include but is not limited to technical training, handler skills and canine operations.

## 3. ICS / NIMS Training

- IS-100: Introduction to Incident Command System, I-100
- IS-200: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
- IS-800: National Response Plan, An Introduction

## 4. Hazardous Materials

- A hazardous materials awareness course that meets 29 CFR 1910 (SARA Title III) requirements
- Respirator Training, 29 CFR 1910-134

## 5. First Aid Training

- Basic first aid training
- Certified in CPR
- The handler shall show proof of basic dog first aid knowledge
- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

## 6. Weapons of Mass Destruction Training

- WMD Awareness Training, Basic Course
- WMD Enhanced Operations Training

## 7. Search and Rescue

- Canine Search Specialist – Any individual that would like to be deployed to an urban disaster (structural collapse missions) shall have successfully completed a Canine Search Specialist course, or equivalent training, that encompasses at least 40 hours of canine urban search and rescue training. This course shall meet FEMA and/or SUSAR Canine Search Specialist training requirements.
- Structural Collapse Technician - Any individual that would like to be deployed to an urban disaster (structural collapse missions) shall have successfully completed a Structural Collapse Technician course that encompasses at least 80 hours of structural collapse technician training. This course exceeds US&R Orientation Training and is required for all Georgia USAR members.

## 8. Training Parameters

- The overall concept of the TF training is not to be a hardship upon its members, but in contrast to ensure that the members receive the necessary training and skills to effectively respond to an event as well as build the confidence and abilities of each member. Members and the K9 Coordinator shall work together to make sure members' training needs are met while at the same time members shall complete the training within a reasonable time.
- Upon membership approval, the ideal goal is to have members complete all required training within a twelve (12) month period. Members are encouraged to pursue this goal with the assistance and guidance of the K9 Coordinator. Members that are not able to meet this goal shall contact the K9 Coordinator to assist with their training progression.
- To minimize the hardship of the members, the ideal goal of new members is to attend 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of scheduled TF training within in a twelve (12) month period to ensure their training needs are met. Once members successfully complete all training requirements and once a canine team is certified, the K9 Coordinator shall partner with each member to ensure their canine is maintained to an operational level and that members maintain their participation with the TF as well as remain proficient with all the skills learned.
- All training records and certifications shall be kept on file by TF and shall be provided for inspection at the request of the K9 Program Manager.

9. Additional Training

- The canine team shall participate in any and all TF training as required by the TF.
- Canine teams shall conduct various canine training on a daily and/or monthly basis to maintain their skills. This may include, but is not limited to, TF training, obedience, agility skills, search operations, exercises, basic care and maintenance or educational training. Copies of training certificates and/or records may be required to show proof of training.

**F. EQUIPMENT**

1. Any equipment owned by the TF that is issued to the canine team, shall remain the property of the TF. If the canine team leaves the TF for any reason, the canine team shall return all TF equipment upon their departure from the TF. This includes any canines purchased by the TF or the Canine Program.
2. The individual whom the equipment was issued to must return all TF equipment in good working conditions within fourteen (14) days of their departure from the TF to the K9 Coordinator or Search Team Manager.

If the equipment is not returned within this time frame, the individual may be reported to law enforcement officials.

3. The team shall ensure that all equipment is in good working condition.
4. The canine team shall present themselves in a professional manner, wearing the required and appropriate uniform and equipment at all events.
5. Individuals shall be allowed to wear their TF uniform to non-TF events so long as the event promotes the professional image and credibility of the TF. Individuals shall use good judgment and shall not wear their TF uniform to any facilities or events that may jeopardize the TF's image and credibility. These situations may include but are not limited to bars, nightclubs, adult themed events, etc.
6. The canine team shall have a working knowledge and confidence in using all equipment effectively during an incident.
7. The handler shall have an understanding of the basic principles of clothing and equipment selection for the search environment.
8. The minimum equipment for the canine team shall include the following:
  - a. Handler
    - \* BDU work pants
    - \* Uniform shirt (long sleeve required on all debris piles)
    - \* Steel toed work boots that provide ankle protection
    - \* At least 16 ounces of water
    - \* Personal ID card
    - \* Leather gloves
    - \* Surveyor's tape or flags to mark the alert area
    - \* Personal Protection Equipment (latex/rubber gloves, face mask, eye protection, knee pads)
    - \* Protective Head Gear (as deemed necessary/required)
  - b. Dog
    - \* Flat collar or correction collar
    - \* 4-6 foot leash
    - \* Search vest to identify the dog as a service dog
    - \* Harness or other equipment used for working
    - \* Reward (toy or dog treats)
  - c. Vehicle
    - \* Appropriate sized kennel for the dog
    - \* At least one (1) gallon of water for each dog
    - \* Water bowl
    - \* Snacks for dog and handler
    - \* Basic first aid supplies for minor injuries (cut pads, hands, etc)
7. Each member shall also have a TF search pack and carry equipment to perform the necessary functions. A detailed list of equipment is outlined in **ATTACHMENT A**. The canine team shall also ensure they carry additional equipment as required or deemed necessary for the

incident. This includes, but is not limited to, being totally self-sufficient for 72 hours or longer. Extra items may include additional clothing, food, bedding, shelter, etc.

## **G. PHYSICAL CONDITION**

1. Understand that disaster search and rescue work is most often physically demanding which involves long hours, strenuous activities, and traveling great distances, negotiating rough and varied debris piles and terrain, and enduring extreme weather conditions.
2. It is highly recommended that individuals interested in pursuing disaster search and rescue should have a complete physical exam performed by their primary physician before participating in an incident.
3. Individuals should pursue an effective physical conditioning program (walking, hiking, weight training, aerobics, etc.) in order to meet the physical demands of disaster search and rescue work.
4. The following physical ability events are a minimum and apply to all TF members who enter the hazard zones of an incident such as a collapsed building. This PAT may be substituted with a departmental PAT, such as CPAT or FF combat challenge. Documentation must be shown. This Physical Ability Test will be conducted at a designated time and place and will basically incorporate the following events:
  - Event 1: Confined Space Entry - Crawl through a tube 20 feet long and 24 inches in diameter from one end to the other, then crawl backward to the point of origin.
  - Event 2: Ladder Climb - Ascend a 35-foot fire department ladder; Touch the top rung with one hand and then descend back to the ground. Do not stop while going up or down the ladder.
  - Event 3: Equipment Carry - Lift a 50-pound box from an elevated waist high surface, carry it in a walking carry for 200 feet (without putting the box down) and then return the box to the starting point. You must be able to complete this task without dropping the box.
  - Event 4: Tool Carry - Lift a 45-55 pound weight from the lift gate of a truck and place it on the ground. Then return the tool back to the lift gate. This procedure will be repeated ten times, within a two minute time period. Event 5: Balance Beam Walk - Walk the length of a 12-foot beam that is four inches wide (unsupported and unassisted) without falling off or stepping from the beam.
5. If a handler is injured or contracts an illness that requires a physician's care, the handler (or handler's family/friend) shall notify the K9 Coordinator of their condition. The handler shall obtain documentation from the physician stating they are able to resume normal physical activities before they are allowed to participant in any TF events or missions.

**VIII. CANINE PARAMETERS****A. RELATIONSHIP WITH CANINE**

1. If a canine is purchased by the TF or the Canine Program, the canine shall remain the legal property of the TF or the Canine Program. Once a handler is assigned a TF owned canine, the handler shall be solely responsible for the care and maintenance of the canine.
2. If the canine is purchased by an individual, the canine shall remain the legal property of the handler, and handler shall be solely responsible for the care and maintenance of the canine.
3. Handlers should understand the importance of the bond and mutual respect between the handler and his/her canine partner.
4. Handlers should ensure the health and well-being of his/her canine partner including but not limited to, proper vet care and nutrition needs, appropriate shelter and grooming needs, and not placing his/her canine partner in undue distress or dangerous situations.
5. Handlers should understand the importance of canine body language and be able to interpret the canine's body language that indicates the canine's general state of health (stressed, tired, alert, relaxed, anxious, etc.).
6. Handlers should be able to recognize and describe or demonstrate to another individual the canine's behavior when it encounters live scent.

**B. CANINE REQUIREMENTS**

1. A canine must be at least at least eighteen (18) months old to be tested for disaster testing and certification.
2. Regardless of who legally owns the canine, a disaster live canine will only be allowed to be trained, tested and certified for live human scent only. It will not be allowed to be trained for any other scent detection (HRD, drugs, bombs, etc). Violation of this rule may terminate the canine and handler's membership from the TF.
2. For disaster live operations, a canine will be limited to test and certify in disaster live only. For disaster recovery operations, a canine will be limited to test and certify in disaster recovery (HRD) only.
3. All canines shall be screened before becoming a member of the TF. A sample of the screening requirements shall be available upon request.
4. Once a canine passes the screening process they will be considered a member of a TF.

5. If a canine passes the initial screening process but it is determined by the TF or K9 Coordinator at a later date that a canine is not suited for TF needs, the canine will no longer be a member of the TF and shall not be allowed at any TF events.
7. Only those canines that are members of a TF are allowed to Respond on State requested deployments.
8. All breeds, except wolf-hybrids, are allowed.
9. The canine must be at least eighteen (18) months old to be tested for disaster certification. As a recommended guide, prospective canine members in training should be between the ages of 12 weeks to 3 years old.
10. Only flat web collars or correction collars will be allowed. Shock, prong or pinch collars will not be allowed at any events.
11. Muzzles are only permitted for use in controlling the dog in the event the dog is injured and the muzzle is required while rendering care to the dog.
12. The canine must be in continual control by its handler or designee.
13. Aggression (toward people or other canines) will not be tolerated at any time. Aggressive canines will be required to leave the search area as outlined in the Aggression Policy.
14. Unless a trained alert at the appropriate time, if the canine barks, the handler should be able to quiet the canine immediately.
15. If the canine is not working and is in a public place, it must wear a vest to identify it as a "service" animal.
16. It is highly recommended that the canine be examined by a veterinarian prior to participating in any training and/or searches.
17. The canine shall not be mistreated or abused by anyone in any manner. This includes, but not limited to, hitting, choking, kicking, cursing or excessive loud verbal bashing, insufficient water, food and shelter, lack of basic needs (grooming, relieving itself, vaccinations, flea and tick prevention), and inappropriate use of prong/pinch or electric collars.
18. If the canine is injured or contracts an illness that requires a veterinarian's care, the handler shall notify the K9 Coordinator. The handler shall also notify the K9 Coordinator when the canine has been cleared by the veterinarian to resume normal physical activities before it is allowed to participate in any TF events or missions.
19. The canine must be in excellent physical condition and have all of the required vaccinations. Verification of vaccinations may be required. The Purina Body Condition System (**ATTACHMENT D**) shall be utilized to determine the canine's physical fitness.

Canines must be rated at the 4 – 5 level to be approved for membership and testing.

### **C. AGGRESSION POLICY**

1. Definition – Canine aggression is an attempted or actual unprovoked attack on another canine or person.
2. Policy
  - a. Aggressive behavior toward people shall not be considered acceptable behavior for a canine.
  - b. A canine must be able to tolerate other canines off leash, and under handler supervision, without showing aggression.
  - c. A canine must allow another person to move it to a different location in the absence of its owner. The canine must not show any aggression.
3. Repercussions
  - a. Canine attacks a person – Upon an unprovoked attack, the canine will be removed from the evaluation and will not be allowed to participate in any future events.
  - b. Canine attacks another canine
    - Short Term – At an event, the evaluator/host/manager shall immediately review the incident and determine if it is an isolated or long-term problem. If it is an isolated incident, they may choose to allow the canine to continue.
    - Long Term – If this is determined to be a standard behavior, the handler will be advised that this canine is unacceptable to the program, and will not be allowed to participate in future events.
    - Reinstatement Policy – The handler may petition GBRT to have the canine re-evaluated upon documentation that behavior modification has been successful.

## **IX. TESTING AND CERTIFICATION**

### **A. MEMBER TESTING PARAMETERS**

1. Certification testing shall be valid for two (2) years for disaster live.
2. Only those canine teams that are authorized members in good standing with a TF shall be allowed to participate in disaster testing and certification.
3. Certifications for canine teams shall remain valid so long as they are members of a TF. Once a canine team leaves the TF, regardless of reason, their certification shall be null and void on the date the canine team leaves the TF

4. For disaster live testing, the canine team must be members of a TF. For disaster recovery testing, the canine team must be members of the Georgia Body Recovery Team and of a TF.
5. Canine teams must complete all required documentation and receive authorized written approval by the K9 Program Director and their K9 Coordinator prior to testing.

## **B. TESTING PROGRAMS**

1. The State of Georgia will utilize the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System, Canine Search Specialist Program for the testing and certification of canine teams for urban disaster search, rescue and recovery. Canine teams that would like to be deployed to an urban incident (live or recovery response) will be required to meet the elements addressed in this program, or equivalent program.
2. Regardless of which program the canine team uses for certification testing, they must also meet any additional requirements outlined in these standards to ensure they meet Georgia laws and regulations (i.e., SAR Dog License).
3. Canine teams that have successfully completed the certification testing shall be placed on a roster identifying them as a certified disaster canine team.
4. The disaster briefing information for canine teams is outlined in **ATTACHMENT B**. And information on marking structures in disaster events is outlined in **ATTACHMENT C**.
5. Programs that are recognized and/or meet the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System are outlined below. Canine teams wishing to be certified as a disaster urban canine team may utilize any of these programs for testing and certification.
  - Georgia Urban Search and Rescue Response System: The Georgia urban canine testing and certification program will mirror the State Urban Search and Rescue Alliance, Canine Readiness Evaluation Process as well as any Georgia laws and regulations as outlined in these standards.
  - State Urban Search and Rescue Alliance: Details may be found at the following site: [www.susar.org/resources/](http://www.susar.org/resources/).

## **C. EVALUATOR PARAMETERS**

1. Any individuals that are utilized as an evaluator for any State of Georgia disaster canine teams shall adhere to the requirements and parameters of the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System, Canine Search Specialist Program.

2. A list of authorized evaluators shall be maintained by the K9 Program Director and K9 Coordinators.
3. A minimum of two (2) evaluators shall be utilized for the testing and certification of disaster canine teams.
4. K9 Coordinators may conduct a Fundamental Skills Assessment pre-test to ensure a canine team is ready for the Readiness Evaluation Process.

**X. DISQUALIFICATION CRITERIA**

- A. Any false information or statements provided in the Canine Application will automatically disqualify prospective canine teams.
- B. Any felony charges or convictions will automatically disqualify prospective and certified canine teams.
- C. Once certified, if the team does not maintain a minimum of 16 hours or more of training per month the canine team may be disqualified.
- D. Canine teams must abide by applicable rules and regulations, including confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements.
- E. Handlers must abide by applicable Code of Ethics.
- F. Violation of the any laws, rules and regulations or Code of Ethics may result in loss of certification, license, loss of membership status, and/or referral to appropriate authorities.

**XI. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF STANDARDS**

The Disaster Canine Team Standards shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the K9 Program Director and K9 Coordinators who are in good standing. A majority vote (at least 75%) shall constitute the approval of said canine standards for the Georgia Urban Search and Rescue Response System.

**XII. QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS**

Questions or comments, please contact the following:

Ronnie Register  
K9 Program Director  
Division of Homeland Security  
Post Office Box 18055  
Atlanta, Georgia 30316  
Email: [ronnie.register@gema.ga.gov](mailto:ronnie.register@gema.ga.gov)  
Cell: 404-326-5701

**ATTACHMENT A****DISASTER EQUIPMENT LIST****Clothing**

- Ball Cap
- BDU Shirt
- Sweatshirt
- T-shirts
- BDU Pants
- Rescue Belt
- Rain Gear
- Poncho
- Boots (steel toed)
- Thermal Underwear (top and bottom)
- Balaclava
- Helmet Liner
- 0° Boots

**Personal Protection Equipment**

- Helmet with Light
- Safety Glasses
- Ear Plugs
- Gloves
- Knee Pads
- Elbow Pads
- Goggles
- Survival Blanket

**Respiratory Gear**

- Half-Face Respirator
- Respirator Filters
- HEPA Filters
- Dust Masks

**Search Equipment**

- Search Pack
- Emergency Whistle
- Flashlight
- Pen Light
- Light Sticks (4 )
- Brief Relief (2 pack)
- Water
- Multi-tool
- Radio Harness
- Radio
- Marking Tape

**First Aid Items**

- Sun Block
- Insect Repellent
- Rubber Gloves
- Hand Sanitizer
- Lip Balm
- Eye wash

**Canine Items**

- Collar
- Leash (4 to 6 feet)
- Search Vest
- Reward Toy
- Dog Food / Snacks
- Kennel appropriate for dog
- Water (1 gallon for each dog)
- Bowls
- Canine basic first aid supplies

**Miscellaneous**

- MRE's
- Food/Snacks
- US&R FOG Manual
- Towels
- Other gear desired or needed for mission

**ATTACHMENT B****DISASTER BRIEFING INFORMATION**

Scene safety interview may include the following:

- What time did the structure collapse?
- What type of occupancy was the structure (school, office, apartment bldg., *etc.*)?
- Was there a fire in this structure and if so is the surface hot or cold?
- What is the number of suspected missing persons?
- Have missing persons been located and/or removed? If so, are these locations marked?
- Are there any animals (including dogs, cats, reptiles, large animals, domestic and exotic) inside the collapsed building or in the vicinity of the search area?
- Has this structure been searched before?
- Has a structural engineer checked the building?
  - > What were the findings?
  - > Is it safe to enter?
  - > Are blueprints available?
- Has HazMat checked the building?
  - > What were the findings?
- Have the utilities been secured? How and by whom?
  - > Gas
  - > Electric
  - > Water
- Is Heavy Rescue available?
- Is Medical available?
- Is there a veterinarian available?

## APPENDIX C

**DISASTER MARKING STRUCTURES****Structure / Hazards Mark**

- Struct & Hazmat Spec make a 2' x 2' box on building adjacent to accessible entry.
- Done after doing Hazards Assessment and filling out Structure / Hazards Evaluation.
- Box is spray painted with using International Orange

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- "L" – Stands for the number of live persons found.
- "D" – Stands for the number of deceased persons found.
- "HR" – Stands for the number of "body parts" found (ex: hands, feet, arm, etc).

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- Structure relatively safe for S&R ops. There is little chance of further Collapse.
  - Victims could be trapped by contents
  - or could be unconscious

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- Structure is Significantly Damaged. Some areas may be relatively safe, but others may need shoring, bracing, removal, and/or monitoring of hazards
  - Building could be completely pancaked

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- Structure is NOT SAFE for Rescue Ops and may be subject to Sudden Collapse.
- Remote search Ops may proceed at significant risk.
- If rescue Ops are undertaken, Safe Haven areas, & rapid evacuation routes (with Structure Monitoring) Should be Created.

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- Arrow next to Marking Box indicates the direction of Safest Entry to Structure

**Structure / Hazards Mark**

- HM indicates hazardous material condition in or adjacent to structure.
- S&R Ops normally will not be allowed until condition is better defined or eliminated.

**Structure / Hazards Mark Summary**

15JUN92  
HM NATURAL GAS  
OR-1

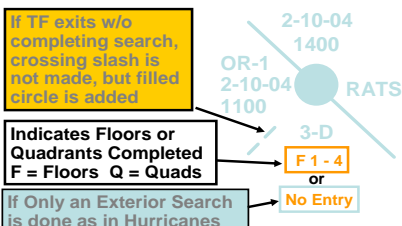
No entry until gas is turned off. When it's mitigated, should line out the HM mark and record new date and TF

**Search Assessment Mark**

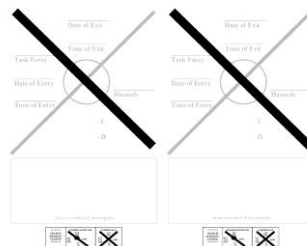
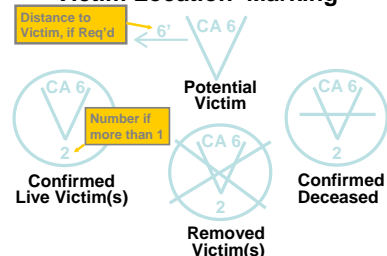
2' x 2' X near each entry

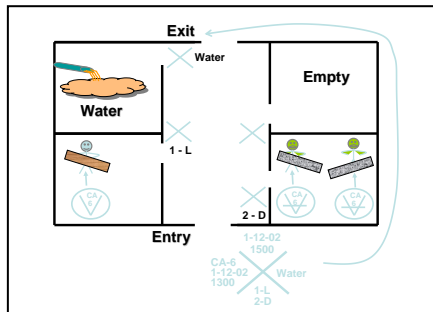
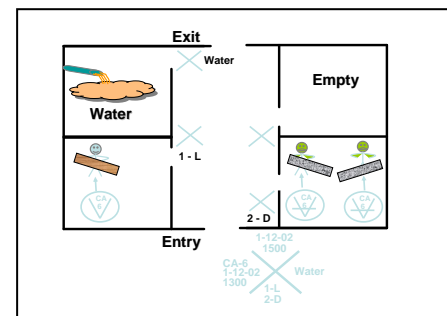
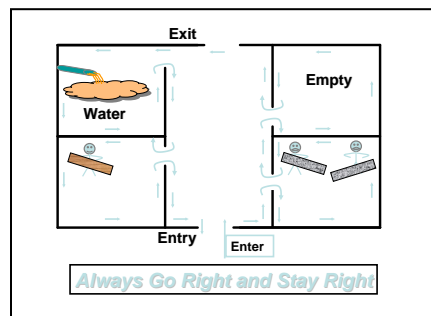
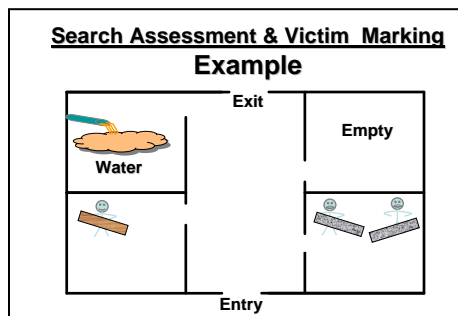
TF indicator, date & time of entry → 2-10-04 1400  
OR-1  
Crossing slash is made as TF exits and then other info is added  
First slash is made when entering  
1-L  
3-D  
2-HR  
RATS  
Exit

**Always Go Right and Stay Right**

**Search Assessment Mark****Modified Mark for Incomplete Search****New Stick-on Search Mark – 8.5" x 11"**

(May cut sheet in half)


**Victim Location Marking**



### Disaster Site Audio Signal/Alerting













(Use Air horn or / Loud Whistle)

- Cease Operations/All Quiet
  - 1 long blast = STOP
- Evacuate the Area
  - 3 short blasts = OUT, OUT, OUT
- Resume Operations
  - 1 long & 1 short blast = Oh. K.



# Nestlé PURINA

## BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN	1	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">1</span>
2	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.	3	
3	Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">3</span>	
IDEAL	4	<b>Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.</b>	5
5	<b>Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.</b>	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">5</span>	
TOO HEAVY	6	Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.	7
7	Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">7</span>	
8	Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">8</span>	
9	Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.	  <span style="font-size: 2em; color: #005596;">9</span>	


The **BODY CONDITION SYSTEM** was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as documented in the following publications:

Mawby D, Barigas JW, Moyers T, et. al. Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and deuterium oxide dilution in client owned dogs. *Compendium* 2001; 23 (9A): 70

Lafamme DP. Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs. *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22: 10-15

Kealy, et. al. Effect of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs. *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Call 1-800-222-VETS (8387), weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT


**Nestlé PURINA**

## **REFERENCES – CANINE TEAM STANDARDS**

American Rescue Canine Association, 1991. Search and Rescue Canines, Training Methods, Howell Book House, New York.

Bryson, Sandy, 1984. Search Canine Training. The Boxwood Press, Pacific Grove, CA.

CARDA, 1997. California Rescue Canine Association Policy and Procedure, California Rescue Canine Association, 9460 Vallejo Drive, Orangevale, CA 95662.

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Federal Emergency Management Agency – FEMA National US & R Response System April 2008.

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United States Police Canine Association, 2000. Detector Dog Certifications - Cadaver Detection.